

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action dated December 20, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully studied. Reconsideration of the rejections of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1 and 3-11 are pending. Claims 1, 3-8, and 10-11 are allowed, but claim 9 is not allowed.

Claim 9 is rejected as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of *Sawyer* (U.S. Patent No. 6,058,115). Applicant notes that claim 9 had been allowed in the previous Office Action.

Applicant respectfully submits that a careful review of the new *Sawyer* reference indicates that this reference is not actually pertinent to the present application. *Sawyer* does not address the subject of signaling, and instead only refers to transmission for payload information.

Thus, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 9, because the features “signaling unit”, “signaling protocol”, “supporting a particular signaling protocol”, and “signaling connection” claimed in claim 9 are missing from the cited *Sawyer* reference.

Additionally, *Sawyer* does not describe communications between a central unit and a terminal, but instead describes communication between two terminals through a network. This point is further clarified by new dependent claim 12 containing the additional limitation, according to which the signaling connection in question is a connection between the central unit and the terminal, and not just some connection that happens to go through some network element on its way between two terminals. New claim 12 introduces no new matter, and is fully supported by the application as originally filed.

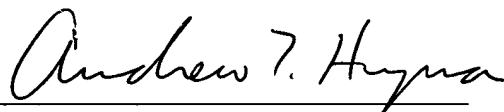
Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and are patentably distinguishable over the cited references for the reasons explained. The rejections of the Office Action of December 20, 2004 having been shown to be inapplicable, retraction thereof is requested, and early passage of all the pending claims to issue is earnestly solicited.

Applicant would appreciate if the Examiner would please contact Applicant's attorney by telephone, if that might help to speedily dispose of any unresolved issues pertaining to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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